

JACQUES ARCHAMBAULT AND HIS FAMILY, WITNESS THE EARTHQUAKE OF 1663

We know that there was a violent earthquake in 1663 that brought panic into the colony. Here are some interesting facts on the subject that we found in the annals of the era.

On February 3, an Indian woman, an excellent Christian, who was still awake in her cabin while all the others slept heard a distinct and clearly pronounced voice that told her: “There will be astonishing and marvellous things happening in two days” (Mother Marie de l’Incarnation.)

An Algonquian woman who stood in front of two Jesuit Fathers signed a statement that was confirmed by her father and mother. “The night of the 4th to the 5th of February, while awake and in full state of mind, I heard a distinct voice that told me: “There will be very strange things happening today: the earth will tremble. On the 9th or 10th hour of the morning of the 5th, this same repeated the same words to the same person who had gone to chop wood in the forest.”

Sister Bourgeois exclaimed, “The earthquake that started on Monday night doubled nine times in nine hours, where neither the force nor the duration was consistent. The first hit was so strong that our doorbell rang at its’ greatest speed.”

“There was another very violent earthquake on February 6th, at 4 o’clock in the morning, said Sister Morin of the Hôtel-Dieu of Montréal. ‘It rocked us so vigorously in our beds, definitely more so than what our mothers ever did in our infancy.’ ”

The earthquake lasted more than 6 months, from February 5th to the month of September. It was felt from the island of Percé and Gaspé, beyond the island of Montréal, as far as New England, Acadia, and other distant places. The earth agitated on a 20-mile stretch in one area. ‘No lives were lost though,’ affirmed Father Lalemant. It was the time of the carnival but the event of fun was changed to days of penitence. One priest alone heard more than 300 confessions in the course of 6 months.

We do not believe that there was not one person who did not confess in this country. We saw admirable reconciliations by watching the enemies kneel one in front of the other to ask each other forgiveness¹.



In 1663, our ancestor was 59 years of age, his wife, 7 months before she died, Françoise Toureau was 64, his daughter Anne was 32 years old, Jacqueline was 31, Marie was 27, Laurent 21, and Marie-Anne 19. Denys died at 20 years of age fighting against the Iroquois Indians.

¹ Élie Salvail, *366 anniversaires canadiens*.